

Carrizo Plain National Monument Advisory Council (MAC) Notes
February 23, 2008

ATTENDEES

MAC: Neil Havlik, Ellen Cypher, Carl Twisselman, Jim Patterson, Michael Khus-Zarate, Ray Hatch, Dale Kuhnle, Andy Stanley for Ray Watson.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM): Tim Smith, Ryan Cooper, Kathy Sharum, Jeff Prude, Larry Saslaw, Nancy Dodson, Judy Sackett, Bob Wick, Johna Hurl, Karen Doran, David Christy.

Managing Partners: Tom Maloney, The Nature Conservancy; Bob Stafford, Deb Hillyard, California Department of Fish and Game

Public: Roger Gambs, Mike Malkin and David Dennis, Friends of the Carrizo; Cal French, Alice Bond, The Wilderness Society; Lodema Hatch; Pat Veesart; Pilulau Khus; W. Asserson, California Department of Fish and Game; Pati Nolen; Bob Nolen; Joe and Luke Rudnick, San Juan Ranch; Craig Deutsch; Art Steinbeck; Eric Greening, Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee; Leonard Bidart and Dean Thompson, Bidart Brothers.

MAC Chair Neil Havlik welcomed the public and opened the meeting with introductions.

Tim Smith BLM Bakersfield Field Office manager, said the preliminary preferred alternative represents the “best shot” at the plan by BLM and the Managing Partners, adding the MAC and public input has been invaluable.

For the next steps, BLM plans to provide an Administrative Draft to the Managing Partners in April and incorporate their comments in a second Administrative Draft. That will be presented to the MAC and briefings will start for BLM officials in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. in June-July. The Draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement will be released for a 90-day public comment period in October.

Tim Smith said the monument proclamation calls for maintaining existing rights including oil and gas leases. BLM has had discussions with at least one company about doing geophysical exploration on their mineral estate, but hasn’t received any applications to do the work. BLM will keep the MAC informed of any new developments.

BLM staff presented the PowerPoint presentation on the preliminary preferred alternative posted at

<http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/bakersfield/Programs/carrizo/cpnmadvisorycmtty.html>

Progress report

Johna Hurl, monument manager, presented the progress report section.

Recreation Management

Ryan Cooper, recreation planner, presented the recreation management section.

He explained that the Front Country zone was the most used area and would be the focus of any development. This zone includes the Soda Lake Overlook, Painted Rock and the Education Center.

On the Wilderness Character Map, the green hatched area is deemed as wilderness protected area (area that best represents the wilderness characteristic); while the green area is what was inventoried and met wilderness characteristics definition reflected in the 1964 Wilderness Act but was not recommended for management. The green areas would still remain underdeveloped.

Dale Kuhnle asked what forms of transportation would be allowed in the Primitive Zone. Ryan Cooper said it would be a non-motorized/non-mechanized zone – no motor vehicles or mountain bikes, but equestrian use would be allowed.

Carl Twisselman asked how access to private land would be designated. Ryan Cooper said access roads to private land would have a limited designation. Johna Hurl said it is a right-of-way issue. BLM doesn't control roads on private land and BLM roads accessing private land will remain open unless there is a resource protection issue. BLM will look at road designations based on the plan criteria on land it acquires.

Carl Twisselman asked about road maintenance. Johna Hurl said BLM will maintain roads where there is a lot of public use and will repair as needed in the front country zone. Carl Twisselman said roads shouldn't be designated closed just because they aren't maintained. Johna Hurl said that would be included in the plan.

Neil Havlik pointed out a road connecting Soda Lake Road and Elkhorn Road with a short section shown as closed which he urged be kept open. He said this road provides a good cross-over for the monument and accesses an excellent site for an interpretive trail for the San Andreas Fault.

Carl Twisselman asked if there are specific rules in the plan for use such as hunting. BLM staff said there are special rules already in place such as no-shooting zones. Fish and Game enforces hunting regulations.

Michael Khus-Zarate said there are cultural sites outside the front country zone and protecting them from shooting damage could be a problem.

Johna Hurl said if there are special areas that need protecting, people need to inform BLM. Deb Hillyard said Fish and Game enforces hunting regulations and BLM enforces zone regulations.

Neil Havlik asked if varmint hunting is legal any time, if the ban on lead bullets applies to the Carrizo. He said varmint hunters might shoot an antelope ground squirrel thinking it is a different species. He said he would like to see a road that give access to the San Andreas fault trace left open as a loop road.

Pat Veasart suggested the state Fish and Game Commission should consider closing the monument to varmint hunting.

Eric Greening asked about dispersed camping: car camping versus parking the car and hiking to camp.

Ryan Cooper said visitors can either car camp or park and hike in off the valley floor. The plan goes into detail. There are some areas already disturbed and campers will be encouraged to use those. BLM will monitor camping and assign camping areas if growing areas are being damaged. Johna Hurl said there are already areas designated for dispersed camping. BLM will continue to designate areas and develop management criteria. BLM will start with education, but can close areas if necessary.

Eric Greening suggested BLM look at Big Bend National Park as an example.

Pilulau Khus said she is concerned that cultural sites be protected from shooting. Johna Hurl said there is a no shooting zone currently in place that includes the visitor center and painted rock. If there are other areas of concern BLM could consider those.

Pilulau Khus asked about controls on equestrian use in the back country or primitive zones. Johna Hurl said there are limits on the size of a group of riders and organized groups need permits. No permit is required for casual users.

Pat Veasart commented setting up zones to protect cultural areas could highlight their locations.

A member of the public asked if there was a target date for BLM to hire rangers.

Tim Smith said BLM has been trying unsuccessfully for a year to recruit a ranger. A vacancy announcement will close March 3 and he hopes BLM will be able to hire someone from that announcement. If they hire someone who is not a BLM ranger, training will take about a year. Hiring rangers is a problem throughout BLM.

Pilulau Khus said a local resident hunts pigs to feed his family and she supports allowing subsistence hunting.

Neil Havlik summarized the concerns expressed as non-game hunting, subsistence hunting, lead bullets, shooting in general, damage to archaeological sites, dispersed camping and specific roads.

Biology

Kathy Sharum, BLM biologist, gave the Biology presentation.

She said a Conservation Target Table (CTT) is being developed that identifies objectives and actions to meet those objectives.

Neil Havlik asked if the table would be numerical or more general. Kathy Sharum said it would be both. Deb Hillyard said there would be numerical objectives, for example, for pronghorn antelope and elk herd sizes.

Tom Maloney said the CTT would be revised using adaptive management as they learn more about the resource. Bob Wick said the plan will contain a process to update the CTT. Kathy Sharum said there will be a monitoring component. Deb Hillyard said the plan will contain an abbreviated version of the CTT as an appendix.

Pati Nolen asked if there will be targets for grasses. Neil Havlik asked if the plan will contain goals and objectives, but the management actions will vary.

Bob Wick said adaptive management is seen by some as you try something and if that doesn't work you try something else. The Department of Interior has a structured adaptive management process that is based on actions, monitoring and review based on objectives. It is not a haphazard process.

Pat Veesart asked if the partners will be consulted as changes are made. Bob Wick said a process is spelled out that includes consultation.

Ray Hatch asked how the management plan will affect staffing. Johna Hurl said BLM will do an implementation plan that spells out staffing and funding needs, and lists priorities. Tim Smith said BLM will do a business plan with work to do and cost targets. Bob Wick said it will include outside resources in addition to federal funds.

Pilulau Khus asked if the first priority would be preservation of species – do no harm – when using the variety of vegetation management tools such as grazing and fire.

Kathy Sharum said there are many different plant communities and BLM wants the monument in a natural state. Tom Maloney said a number of conservation targets look at vegetation abundance and distribution.

A member of the public asked if there is a list of native plants. Johna Hurl said she can provide one and there will be one in the plan.

Eric Greening said adaptive management is an arrogant term for experiment. He asked if BLM will monitor late successional stages.

Deb Hillyard said management will look at a mosaic. The adaptive management program will be management by objective. BLM will act based on an assumption, monitor if it causes the desired effect and make changes based on a feedback loop. There will be different management scenarios. Tom Maloney said management may include a decision to do nothing. The partners said the difference would be measured between lands using and not using a management prescription.

Cal French said the Central Valley originally may have been more than just a grassland and the Carrizo may need to be managed for more than grasses. With climate change and the Endangered Species Act, they may be creating more of a zoo than a preserve.

Neil Havlik asked what characterizes the core areas: what's the difference between core and non-core areas. Larry Saslaw said they were designated based on experience in the 1990s. The focus of management is the right type of structure to maintain a species population. The core areas have the highest populations and best habitat and serve as a safety net if populations drop elsewhere on the monument.

Ellen Cypher asked if there is a safety net for rare plants. Bob Wick said there is an overlay map and BLM has the same commitment for plants. Larry Saslaw said the CTT has jewelflower and other species as targets.

Pilulau Khus said plants with importance to Native Americans should be recognized in the plan. Johna Hurl said the plan focuses on native plants and that will include plants of importance to Native Americans. Deb Hillyard said that could be included in the Cultural section.

Neil Havlik said the San Luis Obispo plan listed species of local concern including species that are rare in the area or have some special feature. The monument plan could include isolated populations or those on the edge of their usual range.

Kathy Sharum said the plan includes a number of unique species that are not on the Threatened and Endangered (T&E) list such as bats and burrowing owls.

Carl Twisselman asked if there is documented history on antelope numbers. Bob Stafford said there are some field notes and the herds currently stay in one area.

Dale Kuhnle asked what the current populations of pronghorn antelope and elk are and where the target numbers came from. Bob Stafford said there are about 90-100 antelope (target 250). In other areas, herds are managed at double the number originally released to maintain a viable population. There are about 170-180 elk on the monument, 250-300 including some on adjacent private land (500 target). He noted the numbers are for a 20-year planning horizon.

Neil Havlik asked if new guzzlers would be constructed. Kathy Sharum said existing guzzlers would be maintained, with no new construction.

Neil Havlik said the condor needs unobstructed habitat and asked about powerline construction. Bob Wick said two utility corridors would be eliminated through the RMP. Larry Saslaw said there would be no structures on the Caliente or Temblor ridge.

Michael Khus-Zarate asked about regulations on lead ammo. Bob Stafford said lead is prohibited for big or small game, both center fire and rim fire cartridges, in the condor

range beginning July 1. The Fish and Game Commission is considering how to implement the law.

Bob Nolen asked about illegal sheep grazing next to California Valley. Kathy Sharum said that is a law enforcement issue. Bob Nolen said BLM has indicated it will work with adjacent communities.

Pat Veasart asked if Trees of Heaven would be eliminated. Kathy Sharum said they would if they spread outside the old farmsteads. Bob Wick said they would be replaced with a non-invasive species.

Pat Veasart asked if domestic chukar would be eliminated. Kathy Sharum said there wouldn't be an active eradication program.

Pat Veasart asked if a program to grow grain outside the monument to feed cranes would be funded by the monument. Johna Hurl said it was a response to comments that people would like to see increased crane populations. BLM doesn't plan to fund grain planting off the monument at the expense of projects on the monument. Deb Hillyard said planting grain inside the monument would conflict with other goals.

Eric Greening asked why BLM feels it has to actively manage kangaroo rat habitat. They manage their own habitat. The focus should be managing for the entire ecosystem instead of a species. Kathy Sharum said the rat habitat would only be managed in certain years when grass growth is overwhelming and the rats can't keep up. Tom Maloney said the problem is due to non-native grasses. Management actions won't be needed if they are replaced by native species. Bob Stafford said actions wouldn't be taken everywhere.

Pilulau Khus said she would like to see power lines removed to protect birds. Johna Hurl said they are working on converting facilities to solar power. As facilities are converted, lines can be removed. Kathy Sharum said they will install bird diverters on lines if necessary.

Pilulau Khus said there needs to be more hunter education on lead ammo. Bob Stafford said hunt clubs have contacted Wal-Mart about carrying the ammo and he has seen progress in compliance.

Pilulau Khus asked about bio controls. Kathy Sharum said BLM has looked at some bio controls such as weevils to control yellow star thistle.

A member of the public asked if there would be an annual review of adaptive management by the Managing Partners. Deb Hillyard said the three have acted as partners. There is a Memorandum of Understanding she expects to see updated for the new plan. Johna Hurl said there is a review process for adaptive management.

Neil Havlik summarized the comments as whether trespass grazing is addressed in the plan, and game hunting versus shooting. He considers releasing domestic chukars shooting rather than hunting.

Grazing

Karen Doran, range conservationist, presented the section on grazing.

Carl Twisselman said the species BLM is managing for have co-existed with grazing for 150 years. BLM should be careful since it isn't known what will happen without grazing. Karen Doran said there will be a mosaic of grazed and ungrazed areas.

Ray Hatch asked if there would be voluntary relinquishment of Section 15 leases and asked what would happen if they aren't relinquished. Karen Doran said the leases would continue as-is if they aren't relinquished.

Pat Veesart asked if Section 15 leases would be managed differently and said he would like to see a program to encourage voluntary relinquishment.

Karen Doran said leases would be managed to meet Rangeland Health Standards and the objectives of the proclamation. Grazing will be managed to meet more specific objectives under the plan. Lease buyouts would be outside the plan.

Pati Nolen asked if Section 15 leases could be cancelled today. Karen Doran said BLM must have to have a valid reason to cancel any existing leases, if it can be managed to meet plan objectives there isn't a reason.

Deb Hillyard said they don't want to make lands unavailable for grazing and give up a management tool. Karen Doran said grazing will be addressed in the Impact Analysis.

Eric Greening asked if the assumptions of families making living using this tool being considered. How can this be just taken away on a decision from you? How do you handle this and how do you consider the expectations of these families? On the south face of the Calientes cattle stay in the prime spots. Will BLM build more fences to control cattle? If so, will they be built consistent with the other monument objectives?

Karen Doran said BLM has regulations that authorize usage. The amount of forage isn't predictable and ranchers need to decide if they want to continue with BLM leases. New fences would need to be consistent with the other monument objectives. BLM is trying to eliminate fences for visual reasons.

Deb Hillyard said ranchers typically have a base ranch they use in years when they can't turn out livestock on the monument.

Dean Thompson said there is no incentive for the ranchers to maintain infrastructure if they aren't allowed to regularly graze. It's hard to use grazing as a tool if it's not available.

Karen Doran agreed ranchers don't have a reason to keep things in repair without an active lease. BLM might maintain water in a few areas for antelope that could be used by livestock.

Larry Saslaw said the issue will be addressed in the Impact Analysis.

A member of the public asked if ranchers would be compensated for their capital assets on the monument if they relinquished their leases. Karen Doran said that would be addressed at relinquishment, but regulations address the compensation issue.

A member of the public asked if BLM considered that water systems have been in place a long time and have become part of the ecosystem. Karen Doran said that was included in the analysis. BLM looked at the big picture, water guzzlers are beneficial for some species, but not all.

Bob Nolen asked how grazing would be managed in the Primitive zone; would there be new structures. Karen Doran said anything done must meet the monument objectives.

Patti Nolen said changes in grazing changes the water system on the Monument and the impact on the ecosystem needs to be considered.

Pilulau Khus said water and fences have been a huge issue for decades. She was glad to see public comments reflected in the preliminary preferred alternative.

Fire

Fire slides were presented by Larry Saslaw, biologist

Ellen Cypher asked if a biologist is called out during a fire. Larry Saslaw said there is a biologist on the fire team during a fire.

BLM will use the CTT to look at fire suppression or use and will develop maps designating fire management for the different areas. Tom Maloney said non-native grasses have altered the fuel regime, which is another reason to keep fires small.

Neil Havlik asked about fire in juniper woodlands. Johna Hurl said the juniper area is part of an existing wilderness study so there is no mechanical clearing. Larry Saslaw said wildland fire is off the table presently, but will be used if prescribed.

Neil Havlik asked about sub-scrub fire. Larry Saslaw said BLM will have to analyze that.

Eric Greening asked about indigenous usage of fire to tend ecological areas in the past. Michael Khus-Zarate said Native Americans used it as a tool for purposes such as clearing hunting grounds. The grass community has changed since then and there's not a clear direction on how to use fire.

Pilulau Khus said there is a difference of what was then and what is now. Conditions were assessed then on a small scale that people now are not trained to observe. Now we rely on the information that is made available through science.

Neil Havlik asked BLM to look into the indigenous use of fire and applicability to the RMP.

Cultural

Johna Hurl presented the Cultural Slides.

Michael Khus-Zarate asked if laws and regulations considered when goals and objectives are being managed. Johna Hurl said BLM will consider the applicable laws and regulations first and then goals within those parameters.

Michael Khus-Zarate said in reference to painted rock, the preservation of this resource needs to take priority. He asked permits are required and what is the process. Johna Hurl said that will be developed in the plan in consultation with the Native American Advisory Council. There may be a self-guided tour permit that people could get on site.

Michael Khus-Zarate said his concern is the security of the site. There needs to be a real process to get a permit that is not too loose. There should be a notification process, not just signing a register at the site. Bob Wick said research has shown that requiring a signed permit that must be carried is effective in making people act responsibly.

Michael Khus-Zarate said there has been a lot of discussion about how to educate people, but site security is still a concern. If there is a conflict, the law has consistently come down in favor of site security over public access. Fires in the alcove and trash are among the issues that need to be addressed.

Carl Twisselman asked how it is determined if a person is a Native American or authorized user for painted rock ceremonies.

Michael Khus-Zarate said the Native American Advisory makes the decision. Painted Rock is well known within the Native American community and the council interviews the applicants. The council's goal is for people to respect the site and follow the law.

Neil Havlik asked if self-guided permits would be consistent with decisions to date. He thought the issue had been discussed with the Native American Advisory Council and the decision was to allow only guided tours. He asked BLM to follow up with the council.

Neil Havlik said BLM needs to need address arrested decay and the combines that are in disrepair. They need to be protected from the elements.

Pilulau Khus agreed that the Native American council needs to have input on the permits for non-guided visitors to painted rock.

Bob Nolen asked if funding/resources are lacking for the monument, why not consider an Archeological Stewardship program?

Johna Hurl said Southern Sierra Archeological Society is doing some monitoring presently.

Bob Nolen asked if restoration of the cultural sight is feasible.

Johna Hurl said would have to be discussed with Native American council.

Michael Khus-Zarate said the Southern Sierra Archaeological. Society's work at the painted rock site has been good so far. They have been working with Duane Christian, BLM archaeologist.

He said the Getty Foundation tried some restoration issue of rock art at Painted Rock with mixed results. There are a number of problems with restoration including the chemistry of the rock, paint, erosion, and bird droppings. So far it is pretty much a hands-off policy. Some Native Americans don't want paintings refreshed. People can attend the Native American Advisory Council meeting hear discussion.

Eric Greening said that the Australian Park Service be contacted and see what their model is for renewing paintings by aboriginal people and preserving their culture. He suggested unarrested decay be an alternative. Bob Wick said that is one of the alternatives.

Pat Veasart said he supports a permit program, but it should error on the side of being restrictive. He thought it was a change of direction from what Native American Council previously approved.

Public Comment

Eric Greening recapped his concerns: use of the word "management," including late succession in the mosaic, including indigenous people's use of fire, conserving cultural resources. He asked if public could get a preview on the web site well in advance of the next meeting to allow for an informed public comment on the work in progress.

Pati Nolen noted that BLM had talked about neighboring and gateway communities, but there was no one from California Valley at the meeting. She asked that BLM address the dumping and sheep trespass on BLM property. She asked BLM to look into the issues affecting neighboring communities, in particular California Valley. She would like BLM to take an interest in how California Valley and its residents affect the monument. When incinerator plants were proposed near Joshua Tree and Bryce Canyon, agencies became involved.

Cal French said a proposed solar plant north of the monument might affect it. It will employ 400 people during construction and 139 permanently, and there might be more OHV use.

Pilulau Khus said the solar plant permit should address concerns and mitigation funds should be included.

Pati Nolen said lights at the plant will cause nighttime light pollution.

Bob Nolen said soil sterilants will be used at the plant site and asked about possible impacts to Soda Lake.

Neil Havlik asked BLM to investigate whether there might be a hydrologic connection to Soda Lake for discussion at the next meeting.

Deb Hillyard said the project is on a fast track, so there is a limited timeframe.

Ray Hatch said there are a number of concerns besides hydrology including the size of the structure, lights and traffic.

Tim Smith gave a summary of actions pending and set the next MAC meeting for June 28 as a half-day meeting.

Mineral Resources

Jeff Prude presented the Mineral Resources slides.

A possible seismic survey was discussed.

Neil Havlik asked if the geophysical information would be made available to the public.

Jeff Prude said the information typically is proprietary, but it may be available for a price.

Ray Hatch asked if leases could be exchanged for leases off the monument. Jeff Prude said that is something BLM could look at. He noted the leases have been available for development for a long time, but there usually isn't enough oil to develop a well.

Ray Hatch said technological advances and how they might change the feasibility of drilling needs to be considered.

Tim Smith said BLM is open to exchange of resource rights. However, there needs to be an exchange of resources of comparable value. Proposed exchange areas would be appraised.

Bob Wick said the plan does allow for exchange and acquisition.

Tom Maloney said without a value it is hard to know what to offer. This research might provide that and then we could consider purchase.

Jim Patterson asked what controls BLM would have over development. Jeff Prude said the lease holder has a right to "reasonable access," but would need specific approvals from the BLM on how sites are developed. BLM could impose limits and requirements to minimize impact.

Tim Smith said the work would be subject to NEPA, Fish and Wildlife consultation and other regulatory requirements.

Neil Havlik asked that historic information on the oil industry be considered for the interpretive program.

Pati Nolen asked if there was a notification issue due to the split estate. Jeff Prude said the situation is the opposite of private property – BLM owns the surface.

Pilulau Khus expressed a concern about the impacts of the oil and gas industry on public lands and the ability of agencies to protect those lands.

Pat Veasart said BLM should draw the line as close to resource protection as possible.

Eric Greening asked if BLM would lead the environmental review of the project. He said practices that damage the environment require mitigation and the best mitigation is avoidance. He asked if new oil-drilling technology is lighter on the land.

Jeff Prude said BLM has Best Management Practices to minimize environmental impact that are posted on the web..

Erik Greening said BLM should also consider that lights and sound are also disruptive to the environment. Jeff Prude said that would be evaluated in the environmental review.

Pati Nolen asked for examples of Best Management Practices.

Larry Saslaw said there is a former oil pad in Lokern that is now covered by saltbush and reclamation is a standard industry practice.

Bob Nolen asked about the borrow pit site. Johna Hurl said it has not been designated; there are sites used in the past. BLM usually hauls in gravel and would only use the site in an emergency.

Neil Havlik summarized: Could BLM identify borrow pit sites; the public wants to see agencies push the envelope in favor of environmental protection when dealing with oil companies; BLM should ask for the geophysical information and make companies justify their refusal to provide it; the plan should set the bar as high as possible to minimize effects of exploration and extraction.

Bob Stafford said larger companies see environmental compliance as the cost of doing business, but the smaller ones have more limited resources.

Jeff Prude said BLM has been tightening standards since 1996.

Neil Havlik said there should be a fund to fix older sites.

Carl Twisselman cautioned the mineral rights were in place when the land was purchased for the monument and BLM needs to be careful it isn't taking away property rights by regulation.

Pilulau Khus said if the ground will be disturbed a Native American resource expert should be required on these sites.

Pati Nolen mentioned eminent domain proceedings in Santa Maria and Paso Robles.

Next Steps

Bob Wick presented the Next Steps slide. Tim Smith said the comment process for the draft is not a voting process. Comments that have an explanation and rationale are the most useful.

Closing

Ellen Cypher said she felt there has been a great deal of progress and was glad to see agreement by the three partners.

Dale Kuhnle asked about the science review status. Johna Hurl replied that there was an initial meeting to discuss research. Scientists will review proposed research projects. Tom Maloney said, based on comments by the scientists, TNC is looking at satellite imagery to monitor conditions, including kangaroo rat burrows, on the Carrizo. TNC has the lead for science review.

Dale Kuhnle said it was refreshing to see the wealthy oil companies instead of the cattle barons draw the criticism at the meeting. In response to comments about ranchers depending on the monument for forage, he said there has been no grazing at the KLC for over five years and ranchers no longer depend on the monument.

Michael Khus-Zarate said he thinks the plan is going in the right direction and appreciated getting the slides before the meeting. He is a little concerned about the lack of a liaison with California Valley and that problems in that area might get out of hand. He also is concerned about possible impacts from the solar plant. He wants BLM to work with the Native American council regarding access to Painted Rock.

Carl Twisselman said he has worked on a number of RMPs and this one is the best he has seen at this stage.

Ray Hatch said Taft has a signed agreement with BLM and has signs and information on the monument at the Taft visitor center. Taft has received a grant to install an electronic information kiosk for visitors. It will be installed outside the chamber and contain information on the monument. Taft has tried to get representatives from the solar project to make a presentation and will encourage them to build near Taft if the Carrizo project falls through.

Andy Stanley said Ray Watson plans to attend the next meeting and looks forward to the next steps.

In conclusion, Neil Havlik said he is glad to see harmonious relationships among the managing partners. The details are important and he would like BLM to get the Conservation Target Table to the MAC as soon as possible, along with the general and Carrizo-specific Range Health Guidelines. He asked BLM to look at possible hydrologic impacts to Soda Lake from the proposed solar project. BLM should try to get California Valley involved and contact the Community Services District on issues of common concern. BLM needs to discuss Painted Rock access with the Native American Advisory Council. He expects the MAC will defer to the council on that issue. He asked if shooting, including releasing birds to shoot, is an appropriate use of the monument. He also summarized concerns about varmint hunting.

Tim Smith thanked the MAC and Neil Havlik for working through the large amount of information and said he will keep the MAC informed on the geophysical exploration issue.

Next meeting June 28, location to be announced.